Assessment Benefits & Barriers

Introduction

Welcome to the Module on the benefits and barriers of assessment. Whether you are a faculty member, staff member of administrator in higher education, this module should provide a useful introduction to some of the reasons to engage in the assessment process and common issues institutions encounter. Through completing this module, you should be better able to communicate how assessment work can be beneficial for different members of your campus community, and generate concrete ideas about how you can use assessment data at your institution to make evidence-based decisions. This module will also allow you to identify some of the barriers, you have or are likely to encounter when engaging in the assessment process, and suggest steps you could take to overcome these barriers at your institution.

As you work through the different sections of the module we will begin each one by asking you to reflect on and write about some of your own experiences with assessment. Don’t worry if those experiences have been limited or if they have been negative. You will have the opportunity to watch videos in which faculty and administrators from other institutions will share their experiences with the benefits of engaging in assessment and some of the barriers they have faced. You will also have the opportunity to read examples and case studies from other institutions as well as some perspectives from the literature on assessment. After each activity of this sort, you will generally be asked to think back and expand on your written responses you initially provided. If possible, we strongly recommend you find one or more colleagues who would be willing to work through the module with you and discuss your responses together.

Finally, you will also be given activities in which you choose an assessment scenario that best matches your role at your institution or are asked to generate ideas specific to your own institutional needs. We hope that through these activities you and any colleagues with whom you complete this module will come away with concrete ideas about how to improve assessment efforts on your campus.